

# CAPCOG CONNECTIONS

A Publication of the Capital Area Council of Governments



## CAPCOG Seeking Elected Officials for Economic Development Committee

CAPCOG is looking for elected officials to serve on the board of directors for the Capital Area Economic Development District (CAEDD). The CAEDD is a committee made up of leaders in business, government, education, and non-profit organizations that coordinates economic development programs in CAPCOG's ten-county service area. CAPCOG staffs the CAEDD, which is a federally-designated Economic Development District funded by the U.S. Economic Development Administration. The CAEDD is one of more than 20 such Districts in Texas.

The CAEDD is overseeing several major projects this year, such as CAPCOG's work with school districts on Achieve Texas. CAPCOG has partnered with the Rural Capital Area Workforce Development Board to help school districts make changes to their career and technical education programs as mandated by the Texas Education Agency under the Achieve Texas initiative. Board members played an important role in planning this research project, which was highlighted recently in the *Austin Business Journal*. The CAEDD will also be directing a study on regional competitiveness, which will identify best practices in regional economic development from around the U.S. and make recommendations for initiatives that can be implemented in the Capital Area. Finally, CAEDD board members are among the first to know about new CAPCOG services that can benefit your local community, such as current demographic data, retail market analysis, updated aerial imagery, and free GIS tools.

Contact Brian Kelsey at 512-916-6183 or [bkelsey@capcog.org](mailto:bkelsey@capcog.org) for more information.

## CAPCOG Helping School Districts with Achieve Texas

School districts around the region are getting some help preparing the next generation of workforce for Central Texas.

The Capital Area Council of Governments and the Rural Capital Area Workforce Development Board have formed a partnership to assist school districts with Achieve Texas implementation. Achieve Texas is a statewide Texas Education Agency initiative requiring school districts to redesign their career and technical education (CTE) programs by 2012. Redesigned CTE curriculum will be modeled after the federally-defined "career cluster" system, which encourages students to take course sequences during high school that provide the skills necessary for employment in specific industries. Examples of the sixteen career clusters include Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources, Health Science, Information Technology, Manufacturing, and Transportation, Distribution and Logistics.

CAPCOG's Center for Regional Development is leveraging its database and research resources to provide school

districts with customized labor market information for the ten-county region. The goal of the work is to help school districts prioritize the sixteen career clusters based on expected growth in



high-wage industries. For example, the Planning Career Pathway course sequence in the Government and Public Administration career cluster is designed to prepare students for many of the jobs available here at CAPCOG. In 2007, there are approximately 27,000 jobs in CAPCOG's ten-county service area that require knowledge and skills provided by the Planning Career Pathway. The median wage for those jobs is \$25.80 per hour, which is more than 60% higher than the median wage for all occupations in the region. Meeting the challenges of a rapidly growing region requires an expanding Planning workforce, and those occupations are expected to increase by approximately 10% during the next five years.

Clearly, it is a good time to be a planner in Central Texas, and we should encourage promising students to pursue such a noble career choice.

For more information on CAPCOG's work related to Achieve Texas, please contact Brian Kelsey at 512-916-6183 or [bkelsey@capcog.org](mailto:bkelsey@capcog.org).

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## CAPCOG Awards \$1,306,785 to Local Service Providers for Hurricane Katrina-Related Services

The Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG) received \$2,443,747 in Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) funds from the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to distribute to vendors that have provided Hurricane Katrina relief services in the 10-county area of Region 12: Bastrop, Blanco, Burnet, Caldwell, Fayette, Hays, Lee, Llano, Travis, and Williamson counties.

All provided or proposed services/activities for Track A: Reimbursement or Track B: Continued Support must have or must have proposed to meet one or more of the following HHSC goals:

- Achieving or maintaining economic self-support to prevent, reduce, or eliminate dependency
- Achieving or maintaining self-sufficiency, including reduction or prevention of dependency
- Preventing or remedying neglect, abuse, or exploitation of children and adults who are unable to protect their own interests, or preserving, rehabilitating or reuniting families
- Preventing or reducing inappropriate institutional care by providing for community-based care, home-based care or other forms of less intensive care
- Securing referral or admission for institutional care when other forms of care are not appropriate and/or provided to individuals in institutions

Services eligible to be covered with the SSBG funding include the following:

Case Management Services	Housing Services
Congregate Meals	Independent & Transitional Living
Counseling Services	Information and Referral
Day Care Services - Adults	Legal Services
Day Care Services - Children	Prevention and Intervention Services
Educ and Training Services	Protective Services - Adults
Employment Services	Protective Services - Children
Foster Care Services - Adults	Residential Treatment Services
Foster Care Services - Children	Special Services - Disability
Health Related & Home Health	Special Services – At Risk Youth
Home Based Services	Substance Abuse Services
Home Delivered Meals	Transportation Services

### Track A – Reimbursement Vendors

Foundation for the Homeless	5,199.00
Foundation Communities	95,254.00
Travis County Health and Human Services & Veterans Services	10,990.00
Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid	51,920.00
Texas Housing Foundation Housing Management Corporation	20,595.00
Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Travis County, Inc.	72,524.00
Bastrop County Emergency Food Pantry and Support Center Inc.	836.00
Bluebonnet Trails MHMR	31,802.00
Meals on Wheels and More, Inc.	40,015.00
Golden Touch Academy	36,542.00
<b>Sub-Total for Track A Applicants</b>	<b>365,677.00</b>

### Track B – Continued Support

Foundation Communities	36,097.00
Caritas of Austin (For Best Single Source)	271,446.00
Austin Area Urban League	180,580.00
Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid	102,520.00
Texas Housing Foundation Housing Management Corporation	7,573.00
Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Travis County, Inc.	52,738.00
Samaritan Center for Counseling and Pastoral Care	49,920.00
Texas Interagency Interfaith Disaster Response	181,911.00
United Way Capital Area	58,323.00
<b>Sub-Total for Track B Applicants</b>	<b>941,108.00</b>
<b>Total Track A and Track B</b>	<b>1,306,785.00</b>

### Center for Regional Development Adds Planner

The CAPCOG Center for Regional Development (CRD) has a new employee. Chris Ramser, Community Planner, joins us from the Central Texas Council of Governments (CTCOG). At CTCOG, Chris staffed the Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Water Conservation District. Chris graduated from Southwestern University in Georgetown where he also served as intern for the city planning department. Originally from Wichita Falls, Chris is an alumnus of the Wichita Falls Fighting Coyotes.

## CAPCOG's Regional Solid Waste Management Plan Nearing Adoption

The TCEQ is preparing to adopt CAPCOG's Regional Solid Waste Management Plan (RSWMP) at its upcoming meeting in April. TCEQ's Office of Permitting, Remediation, and Registration Team has requested



Chris Ramser  
Community Planner

minor modifications to the plan submitted in 2002 in anticipation of final approval.

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are funded by the TCEQ to develop a RSWMP that outlines the activities and priorities that will be initiated in the region throughout the planning period of 2002-2022. The RSWMP includes population & growth patterns, economic activity, waste generation & characteristics, waste management systems, summary of needs & problems, goals & objectives and an action plan for the region. CAPCOG's Solid Waste Advisory Committee provides oversight and input during development and reviews of the plan. The most recent draft can (See **SOLID WASTE** p. 4)

## EPA Grant Received for Central Texas School Buses

CAPCOG is one of six organizations in Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana to be awarded a grant from EPA's Blue Skyways Collaborative to help cut emissions of harmful pollutants from school buses. The grant of \$145,049 will be used by the Clean School Bus Program of Central Texas (a partnership between CAPCOG and the CLEAN AIR Force of Central Texas) to meet the costs of reducing emissions from diesel-powered school buses in two school districts.



chasing a hybrid diesel electric school bus. San Marcos Consolidated ISD has been selected as one of the two districts to receive funds for retrofits and B20 purchase, and the selection of the second district is in process.

Once implemented, the project is expected to reduce more than 16,000 lbs. of smog-forming pollutants and 560 lbs. of particulate matter (PM) every year of the life of the affected school buses.

Children are particularly sensitive to air pollution. Because their respiratory

systems are still developing and they breathe at twice the rate of adults, the ultra-fine particles in PM are especially harmful to their health, causing and/or exacerbating a range of respiratory diseases, including asthma. Asthma is the number one reason children are absent from school and the number one reason children are admitted to Austin Children's (see *BUS* p. 4)

The grant will be used to retrofit up to 40 buses with new emissions reduction technologies, meet the incremental costs of purchasing over 208,000 gallons of B20 biodiesel (a blend of 20% pure biodiesel and 80% petroleum diesel), and provide \$20,000 to help Austin Independent School District meet the costs of pur-

### The Regional Training Academy Produces Two More 100% Classes

The Regional Training Academy (RTA) recently graduated two Basic Peace Officer Course (BPOC) classes for a total of 51 cadet graduates who took the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education's (TCLEOSE) State Peace Officer Licensing Examination and passed on the first attempt.

Law enforcement academies throughout the State of Texas are evaluated by TCLEOSE on their first-attempt pass rate at the Peace Officer Licensing Examination, as well as the results of each academy's annual audit. TCLEOSE standards governing first-attempt pass rates dictate that academies (See *RTA* p. 4)

### Patricia Bordie to Receive Award

Patricia Bordie, Program Manager in CAPCOG's Aging Division, will receive the AGE Professional Spirit Award at their 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards Dinner that will be held at the University of Texas Alumni Center on April 20, 2007.



Patricia Bordie

The AGE Professional Spirit Award honors one whose professional commitment goes above and beyond their job description and

who has touched the lives of older Austinites. Patricia's level of professional and personal commitment to her work and the older people she serves epitomize this award. Since her employment began with CAPCOG in 1999, it was obvious that Patty was passionate about the field of aging. Her passion was rooted in the difference her work could make in the lives of older adults. (see *AWARD* p. 4)

## Capital Area Participates in WMD Regional Exercise

"This is a drill, this is only a drill" were the words repeated during a two-day weapons of mass destruction (WMD) regional exercise Feb. 21st and 22nd.

CAPCOG and its ten-county region were invited to participate in the state-wide exercise program sponsored by the Governor's Division of Emergency Management (GDEM). The main goals of the exercise were to test regional response plans and communications interoperability during a disaster.



The exercise consisted of a simulated scenario that occurred in downtown Austin and an incident command post being established at the Travis County Expo to test radio communications. Smaller simulated disasters were also occurring in jurisdictions within Williamson, Hays, Burnet, Llano, Bastrop, Caldwell, and Fayette counties. Jurisdictions opened and established Emergency Operations Centers in order to manage the simulated events.

Highlights from the exercise included regular briefings to gain situational awareness, use of mutual aid agreements with neighboring cities and counties, effective use of radio (See *WMD* p. 4)

## HUD Celebrates Fair Housing Month

This year marks the 39th annual celebration of Fair Housing Month. Each April, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) commemorates this occasion and celebrates the strides it has made in furthering this landmark civil rights law. The 2007 Fair Housing Month theme is "Fair Housing: It's Not An Option, It's the Law."

(See *HUD* p. 4)

**SOLID WASTE** (cont'd from p. 2)  
be found on CAPCOG's website at  
<http://www.capcog.org/crd/solidwaste/swrswm.asp>

**BUS** (cont'd from p. 3)  
Hospital.

While replacing older highly polluting buses with buses manufactured to meet the new federal heavy duty diesel emission standards would solve the problem, these new buses can cost over \$75,000. Competing demands on limited budgets make it difficult for school districts to replace older buses still running well enough to transport children to and from school just in order to reduce emissions.

Through the use of retrofit technologies and cleaner fuels funded by the EPA Blue Skyways Collaborative grant, up to 2,000 students will directly benefit every school day from the reduction in pollutants in the air they breathe as they travel to and from school, as will the bus drivers.

**RTA** (cont'd from p. 3) that fail to pass a minimum of 80% of their students on the first attempt be placed on an "At Risk" status and could lose their academy license.

The RTA was audited by TCLEOSE in February of this year and was found to be in total compliance with current

standards. The last three BPOC classes that graduated from our RTA produced a 100% pass rate at the Peace Officer Licensing Examination, a statement to the effectiveness of CAPCOG's BPOC Program.

Of the two classes graduating, BPOC Class 43 with 17 students was the first to graduate this year. Class 43 began in June, 2006, with 22 students, and graduated Feb. 16, 2007, at the Capitol Extension Auditorium. Captain Chris Bratton of the Round Rock Police Department was the keynote speaker. The 34 students of BPOC Class 44, which began in Oct., 2006, graduated Mar. 16, 2007. Graduation ceremonies for Class 44 were also held at the Capitol Extension Auditorium. Captain David Fererro with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission was the keynote speaker.

**AWARD** (cont'd from p. 3)  
She realized early that one person could make a difference, and she was willing to be that one person, if necessary.

Patricia is a highly-regarded professional and an asset to this "community."  
**CONGRATULATIONS!**

**WMD** (cont'd from p. 3)  
communications, tracking and deploying resources, use of WebEOC, and coordination of public information. The region successfully met and dem-

onstrated the communications interoperability criteria measured by GDEM. According to the exercise evaluators, this exercise also showed an overwhelming commitment to regional preparedness and cooperation among the emergency responders in the Capital Area.

For more information about the WMD Regional Exercise, contact Robin Wiatrek at (512) 916-6014 or [rwiatrek@capcog.org](mailto:rwiatrek@capcog.org).

**HUD** (cont'd from p. 3)

The Fair Housing Act ensures that every person, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, or familial status, can obtain the housing of their choice. What's more, the Act promotes the establishment of safe and secure communities where everyone, regardless of nationality, can live free from discrimination.

Throughout Fair Housing Month, HUD events will focus on how fair housing can help foster diverse communities. These events will augment the activities that we and our partners conduct throughout the year and will bring together government agencies, fair housing organizations, and community groups in furthering the goal of creating safe, secure, and diverse communities.

For more information about Fair Housing Month, go to <http://www.hud.gov/offices/fheo/>

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### Capital Area Council of Governments

6800 Burleson Road  
Building 310, Suite 165  
Austin, Texas 78744

P. O. Box 17848  
Austin, Texas 78760-7848

TEL: (512) 916-6000  
FAX (512) 916-6001

[www.capcog.org](http://www.capcog.org)

### CAPCOG Management Staff

512.916.6000

Betty Voights, Executive Director

Clay Collins, Deputy Executive Director  
Bill Gill, Director of Air Quality Planning  
Juliette Brown, Director of Homeland Security  
Scott Huckabee, Director of Criminal Justice

Sean Moran, Director of Center for Regional Development  
Glenda Rogers, Director of Aging Services  
Becky Stewart, Director of Emergency Communications